



# THE GULL

Golden Gate Audubon Society

Berkeley, California

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## THE NATURE OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Join wildlife artist and naturalist **Edward Rooks** on a journey to these Caribbean Islands, located just off the coast of South America, at our September meeting in Berkeley. The slide program will begin at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, September 9th at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda. Mr. Rooks will present an overview of the diverse natural history of Trinidad and Tobago which includes tropical rainforest, mangrove swamps and savannah as well as 400 species of birds and 600 species of butterflies. Included in this incredible biodiversity are Scarlet Ibis, toucans, motmots and the Oilbird, only found in northern South America. The Oilbird is a large, fruit-eating, nocturnal bird which has evolved some fascinating adaptations to its unique lifestyle. It echo-locates like a bat, has a good sense of smell and hovers. Mr. Rooks explains that, "Trinidad is a good place to introduce people to South America. Its diversity is unparalleled for a small island located only 7 miles off the mainland coast. It split off from the mainland only 10,000 years ago, and it is a good introduction to South American wildlife including mammals, insects, amphibians and reptiles, as well as the birdlife."

Edward Rooks was formerly the "Naturalist in Residence" and Assistant Manager at the Asa Wright Nature Center in Trinidad. Now living in California, he returns to Trinidad and Tobago periodically to lead natural history tours for Cheeseman's Ecology Safaris.

—JOELLE BUFFA

### SEED SALE

Order Deadline:  
September 9

— SEE PAGE 133 —

## PLAN AHEAD: FUTURE GGAS PROGRAMS

Thursday, October 14: San Francisco, Josephine Randall Museum "To Catch a Mockingbird—Bird Monitoring in the Sierra Nevada" by Jim Steele. Find out what biologists are learning about the comings and goings of birds through a mist-net monitoring project along a transect in the Sierra Nevada. **Wednesday, November 10:** Berkeley, Northbrae Community Church "Earthwatch Programs: Capuchins to Mountain Lions" by Clair Nelson. Learn about Earthwatch volunteer programs all over the world, from studying white-faced monkeys in Costa Rica to tracking mountain lions in Idaho.

**\*\*NOTE** that the November meeting in Berkeley is on **WEDNESDAY** to avoid the Veteran's Day holiday. All meetings begin at 7:30 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

- 6—SF Conservation Committee  
*Call office for location.*
- 9—Orders due for Bird Seed Sale
- 9—**The Nature of Trinidad and Tobago**, Northbrae Community Church, Berkeley, 7:30 p.m.
- 13—East Bay Conservation Committee, GGAS Office, 7:30 p.m.
- 17—Bird Seed Sale pick-ups, GGAS Office, 1:00–4:00 p.m.
- 18—Bird Seed Sale pick-ups, GGAS Office, 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
- 27—Board of Directors, GGAS Office, 7:30 p.m.

## FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

**Saturday, September 4**—Coastal San Francisco. Leader: Dan Murphy (415) 564-0074 (✓).

**Wednesday, September 8**—Mini-trip to Alameda south shore and surrounding areas. leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301, and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

For details on the above trips see *The Gull* for July/August.

**Sunday, September 12**—San Mateo Coast. Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot (on the ocean side) at the junction of Hwy. 1 and Pescadero Rd. We will bird at Pescadero in the morning and at Año Nuevo in the afternoon. We will look for migrants and shorebirds in the mudflats, plus Pectoral and Baird's Sandpipers and Tattlers and Knots. We may also see Marbled Murrelets at Año Nuevo. Bring lunch and a light jacket. Leader: Alan Hopkins (415) 664-0983. (✓)

**Saturday–Sunday, September, 18–19**—Mono Lake. (Our first fall field trip to the Mono Basin area.) Meet at 8 a.m. at Mono County Park. To get there take Hwy. 120 over Tioga Pass to the town of Lee Vining. Continue north 4 miles to Cemetery Rd. (beyond Mono Inn) and turn right (east) to the park. An alternate route is around Lake Tahoe to Hwy. 395, then south to Mono County Park. We will bird this area in the a.m. then hike down Lower Lee

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$10 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$20 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 15, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.

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Vining Creek in the afternoon to inspect the re-watered stream.

On Sunday we will meet again at 8 a.m. at the County Park and carpool to Mono's east shore where we will hike across the alkali bathtub ring in search of migrating Eared Grebes and lingering Snowy Plovers. While looking for fall migrants and Great Basin species—prepare for wind and possible cold or heat. If time permits we will add a fall color excursion. Bring lunch and liquids for both days. Trip will end in mid-afternoon.

County and Forest Service campgrounds are available southwest of Lee Vining (along Hwy. 120 4 to 6 miles west of Hwy. 395) by Lee Vining Creek, and also north of town on Lundy Lake Rd. Motels in Lee Vining include: Best Western Lakeview Motel (619/647-6467), and Murphey's Motel (619/647-6316). Leader: Emilie Strauss (510) 525-5761 (✓)

**Sunday, September 26**—Point Diablo, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Marin Co. Meet at 10 a.m. at the top of Hill 129, where we will watch for migrating hawks and landbirds until 2 p.m. (Fog will cancel.)

From San Francisco drive north across the Golden Gate Bridge and take Alexander Ave., exit. Turn left as if returning to San Francisco, drive under the freeway and bear to the right. Go up to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area; continue (past the intersection with a road coming up from Rodeo Valley) to the large tunnels on the right. Drive to the top of the hill, park and walk up the trail to the left of the second tunnel. We will bird from the observation point at the north end of the hilltop. Bring lunch and liquids. Sunscreen, a hat, and a wind-breaker may be advisable. Co-leaders: Carter Faust (415) 453-2899, and Herb Brandt (415) 239-2711. (✓)

**Saturday, October 9**—Coyote Hills

Regional Park. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Visitors' Center. From East Bay take I-880 south to Rt. 84/Dumbarton Bridge exit. Go west and take Ardenwood/Newark Blvd. exit. Continue on Ardenwood Blvd. three quarters of a mile to Commerce Dr. and follow signs to Coyote Hills. From San Francisco take Hwy. 101 south beyond Redwood City, cross the Dumbarton Bridge and exit on Paseo Padre Pkwy.; go north one mile to Patterson Ranch Rd. and follow signs to Coyote Hills. Bring lunch, liquids, and binoculars and field guides if you have them. This is a unique park with fresh water and salt pond habitat. Leader: Peter Allen (415) 892-8063. \$ (✓)

**Sunday, October 10**—Point Reyes National Seashore. Meet at Inverness Park at the Knave of Hearts Bakery on Sir Francis Drake Blvd. at 8 a.m. We will concentrate on shorebird identification at Abbott's Lagoon. Bring a scope if you have one, lunch and liquids, and comfortable walking shoes. Heavy rain cancels. (If in doubt, call.) Leader: Lina Jane Prairie (510) 549-3187. (✓)

**Wednesday, October 13**—Mini-trip to East Bay shoreline. Meet at 9:15 a.m. From Hwy. 80 in Emeryville take Powell St. exit and go west. Meet at the north end of the parking lot by the Holiday Inn. We will be looking for shorebirds of the area. Lunch optional. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301, and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

**Trips marked with \$** go to parks and other sites that require an entrance fee.

**Carpooling** arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (✓). See below.

**Problems:** If you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, call Russ Wilson, Field Trips Committee Chmn. (510) 524-2399.

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE



## JUNE/JULY OBSERVATIONS

I spent a few days birding in the Boston area in late June; I've also been reading some Wallace Stegner so perhaps my consciousness is hypersensitized but I was reminded once again that the east is not the west. The east is old and lovely and very civilized; it's full of history, but it's also full of people . . . everywhere. We spent part of a day at Plum Island, a barrier island off the coast north of Boston, with long sandy beaches along its eastern expanse and marshes on the west side between it and the mainland; it's part refuge, a beautiful place, the like of which we do not have around here. On the other hand, there aren't many places like it back there either. The day we visited, a warm weekday, it was not particularly crowded, but the ocean beaches were all closed because of nesting terns and it was off-season for bird watchers. Come August, my friends report, the beaches reopen and the beachy crowds descend; and, at the same time, shorebird migration hits its peak and the birders are as thick as black flies. The impression I get is that if you want to look at shorebirds in the Boston area, you either go to Plum Island or you go to Monomoy, off the southeastern tip of Cape Cod, a 2½ to 3-hour drive through devastating (on the weekends, at least) traffic. Compare that to the Bay Area where you check the tide tables and head for any coastal marsh site between Bodega Bay and Monterey (and there are many) or anywhere along the shoreline of San Francisco Bay and there are shorebirds galore and no need to jockey for scope position because of the crowds unless the bird-of-the-century has been found. Although we rave about our undeveloped coastline, it takes a trip to the east to make us fully

appreciate the extent of what we have.

This is really the beginning of the seabirding season; from now through November seabird migration peaks producing great numbers and diversity. A trip to the Cordell Bank on June 19, a time full of potential since birders haven't made a habit of venturing out then, produced some surprising sightings and numbers: **one hundred eighty** Black-footed and one Laysan Albatross; a Northern Fulmar; six Pink-footed, one hundred Sooty and one Short-tailed Shearwater; five Fork-tailed, eighteen Leach's, ninety Ashy, fifteen Black (perhaps the northernmost record for this species) and one Wilson's Storm-Petrel; two Red Phalaropes, five Sabine's Gulls, seven Arctic Terns and eight Xantus' Murrelets (RS, DLSh, CLu). There were a number of reports of **Magnificent Frigatebird**: June 13—S. E. Farallon (PRBO); June 16–17—Sausalito (JRB, BiR); June 25—Monterey Bay (fide RC); and July 13—Point Reyes (JDi). Monterey Bay was a happening place at the end of July with a beached Humpback Whale carcass at Davenport and extraordinary numbers of Leatherback Turtles (the largest of the marine turtles—a dead specimen weighed 800 pounds) and Thresher Sharks; and on July 25, a **Red-billed Tropicbird** was seen on a pelagic trip (DLSh).

A Least Bittern was seen at Coyote Slough in Santa Clara County on July 3 (MJM). This species used to be more common in Northern California, but it is rarely seen here these days. Up to three Little Blue Herons were reported from Alviso (mob); there was also one adult at East Palo Alto from June 5 to 9 (SRo, RSTh, RMrr). A male Harlequin Duck continued to be seen at the mouth of the Big Sur River (RC, GG) and a female Oldsquaw remained at Pescadero Marsh (mob).

An immature Ferruginous Hawk was amongst Swainson's Hawks in eastern Alameda County on June 19, exceedingly late for this species to be seen locally (AME). Many people are surprised to learn that Mountain Quail can be found in the Bay Area and while the species is not common, a study of its habitat preferences and knowledge of local terrain can help pin down likely locations for finding the bird. Finding, however, is not seeing as many frustrated birders will testify after searching in vain for the source of well-heard calls which can travel up to a mile. It was a gratified group which finally, after many fruitless trips, spotted two individuals near Mercuryville in Sonoma County on July 18 (GGr).

Shorebirds are just beginning to return: the first Lesser Yellowlegs are straggling in along with a couple of adult Semipalmated Sandpipers: Pescadero Marsh on June 27 (RSTh) and Coyote Creek Riparian Station on July 18 and 19 (NiL, MiF). A few Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers were sighted from shores along the San Mateo Coast, but a Long-tailed Jaeger seen from Linda Mar on July 19 was a real treat (BS fide RSTh). There was a Laughing Gull at the Carmel River on July 14 (fide RC) and four Franklin's Gulls at Crowley Lake in Mono County on June 3 (TEa). Marbled Murrelets breed in the Santa Cruz Mountains and forage in the nearby ocean so they aren't unusual but a count of 106 in the waters off Año Nuevo on July 11 is notable (PJM). A Tufted Puffin at Año Nuevo on June 4 was thought by the observer possibly to be breeding (GJS fide RSTh).

There was a White-winged Dove at Moss Beach on July 3 (FL fide RSTh); and a Greater Roadrunner on Mt. Diablo on June 11 (DSi). A total of three Costa's Hummingbirds at Mono

Lake on June 12 and 13 (PJM, ES) would be the first records for the area although David Gaines hypothesized in *Birds of Yosemite* that they were "rare but regular" visitors to the east slope. A Red-naped Sapsucker on June 12 also falls into the "rare but regular" category in the Mono Basin (PJM). A Willow Flycatcher at Point Reyes on June 20 (DSg); a Dusky Flycatcher on S.E. Farallon on July 9 (PRBO); and a total of five Eastern Kingbirds from Mendocino to Pacifica comprise the flycatcher sightings for the period.

A Red-eyed Vireo was banded at the Big Sur Ornithology Lab on July 10 (fide RC). Again this month the warbler list is paltry, although there is one particularly notable sighting: a Nashville Warbler feeding young near Healdsburg on June 20 is thought to be the first nesting record for Sonoma County (LLu).

## WARBLERS

### NORTHERN PARULA

2	5/21-6/5	Olema	RAR
up to 5	5/29-7/17	Gazos Creek Rd.	mob
1	6/6	San Francisco	DSg
1	6/12-20	Point Reyes	ArT, RS
3	6/17-20	Samuel Taylor Park	RS
1	7/10	Big Sur	fide RC

### PRAIRIE WARBLER

1	6/5	Big Sur River	JD fide DR
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### BLACKPOLL WARBLER

1	7/9	S.E. Farallon	PRBO
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### BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER

1	6/13	Gazos Creek Rd.	SBT
1	7/9	S.E. Farallon	PRBP
1	7/18	Annadel S. P.	GG

### AMERICAN REDSTART

1,3,1	6/6,24, 7/10	Monterey County	JD fide DR, fide
1	6/7	Mendocino County	JsC
2,1	6/20,23	Point Reyes	RS, SBT, RoH
1	6/22-7/1	Gazos Creek Rd.	RSTh
1	7/10	San Francisco	JSC

### OVENBIRD

2	7/9	S.E. Farallon	PRBO
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### YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT

1	6/19	Contra Costa County	SCg
1	6/20	Año Nuevo	GJS fide RSTh
1+	7/18	Annadel S. P.	GG

A total of seven Rose-breasted Grosbeaks was reported from Point Reyes to Monterey. Indigo Buntings were reported from San Antonio Valley (MMR); Thornton (RAR, EM); Mendocino County (DT); and Point Reyes (fide KH). There were up to six Black-chinned Sparrows on Mt. Diablo (KGH, RAR, JDi); a Bobolink was seen at Big Sur on July 10 (fide RC); and a Great-tailed Grackle remained north of Mendocino from July 14 to 18 (DT). A smattering of Red Crossbills throughout the area and two Lawrence's Goldfinches on Mount Diablo on June 1 (KGH) round out the month.

#### **OBSERVERS:**

J. R. Blair, Rita Caratello, Josiah Clark, J. Scott Cox, Jeff Davis, Jack Dineen, Todd Easterla, Alan M. Eisner, Mike Feighner, Antoinette Gamlin, George Griffeth, Roger Harshaw, Keith Hansen, Kevin G. Hints, Steve Glover, David Hofmann, Jayme Kelly, Fran Law, Jaan Lepson, Nick Lethaby, Cindy Lieurance, Les Lieurance, Michael J. Mammoser, Robert Merrill, Peter J. Metropulos, Ellis Meyers, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Bill Randolph, Don Roberson, Mike M. Rogers, Steve Rotterborn, Ruth A Rudesill, Barry Sauppe, Debra Love Shearwater, Dianne Sierra, Dan Singer, Judy Spitler, Rich Stallcup, Gary J. Strachan, Emilie Strauss, Arthur Taber, Scott B. Terrill, Ronald S. Thorn, Dorothy Tobkin, Bob Yutzy.

Data thanks to Joe Morlan and the Northern California Rare Bird Alert.

—ANN DEWART

## **WANTED: HERON & EGRET SIGHTINGS**

For over ten years the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory has monitored the status of colonial breeding birds along the shores of the South Bay. This year they will be expanding their study to include inland areas of Alameda, Santa Clara, San Francisco and San Mateo Counties. They hope to identify critical inland habitat, and document whether changes occur in the regional population as individual colonies decline or expand. In the event of an environmental disturbance in fragile bayshore habitat now occupied by heron and egret breeding colonies, inland habitat would be indispensable.

Volunteer field observers are needed to report nesting activity by herons or egrets in the above areas. If you observe nesting colonies of herons or egrets the Observatory would greatly appreciate your help.

For more information, write Valerie Layne, SFBBO, P.O. Box 247, Alviso, CA 95002, or call (408) 946-6548.

## **WRITE A LETTER — SAVE OUR WETLANDS**

Congress is about to consider the reauthorization of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) which will include the rewriting of the wetlands component of the act, Section 404.

There is tremendous pressure being exerted on Congress to weaken all of our existing wetland protection statutes including Section 404. The development and real estate industries, the mining, agriculture, oil and timber industries all want to be able to destroy wetlands without penalty and without having to go through an annoying regulatory process.

*(continued on next page)*



Existing laws are already so weak that the nation loses over 300,000 acres of wetlands a year. Any further weakening of Section 404 would be disastrous.

Happily, two Bay Area legislators, Congressman Don Edwards and Senator Barbara Boxer, have introduced strong wetlands legislation: the "Wetlands Reform Act of 1993," HR 350 in the House and S. 1195 in the Senate. The entire Bay Area congressional delegation has co-sponsored the Edwards bill, except for Congressman William Baker from Danville. Likewise, at the time of this writing (July 15), Senator Dianne Feinstein has not co-sponsored Senator Boxer's bill.

Please write to your Congressperson and thank them for co-sponsoring the Edwards bill. If you live in Congressman Bill Baker's district, write and urge him to co-sponsor the Edwards bill, HR 350. Also write to Senator Feinstein and ask her to co-sponsor the Boxer bill.

We also urge you to thank Senator Barbara Boxer and Congressman Don Edwards for introducing good wetlands legislation. It takes considerable courage to introduce controversial legislation. Too few of our legislators are brave enough to introduce good environmental legislation and we should thank those who do. Please write!

The addresses are:  
 Congressperson \_\_\_\_\_  
 U.S. House of Representatives  
 Washington, D.C. 20515

*and*

Senator \_\_\_\_\_  
 U.S. Senate  
 Washington, D.C. 20510

[See HOTLINE, p. 132]

## HELPING HANDS IN RICHMOND

Golden Gate Audubon's conservation activities take place only through volunteer effort. Our Conservation Committees, both East Bay and San Francisco are constantly in need of volunteers to help cover all the issues. In fact, all issues are not covered; just the opposite, because of lack of time and people.

In particular, we presently are in desperate need of someone, or several people, to cover issues taking place in the area around the City of Richmond.

For example, Pinole Regional Park is threatened with development. Several new road extensions in Richmond may threaten wetlands and other habitats. New trails are being proposed along the Bay that may affect shorebirds and ducks.

But we are unable to deal adequately with these issues because of lack of man and woman power. If you live in this area and are interested in helping preserve its wildlife values come to our East Bay Conservation meetings and see how you can help.

We meet the second Monday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at the GGAS office. Our next meeting will be September 13. Hope to see you there.

## CALPAW '94 INITIATIVE

The drive to gather 650,000 signatures by the end of September has been moving forward since early June. CalPAW '94, the Park and Wildlife Bond Act Initiative, would provide state bond funds to purchase and permanently protect \$2 billion worth of critical lands throughout California. As the state's population continues to grow, extraordinary pressure is put on our remaining open space, parkland and

wildlife habitats and it is important that the best of these undeveloped lands be preserved for future generations.

By the time this reaches you, there will be only a month left to finish gathering sufficient signatures to put the measure on the June '94 ballot. However, that's plenty of time to lend a hand:

1. Help with the signature gathering effort: spend part of a day outside the supermarket, or canvassing your neighbors or circulating petitions among your friends. Contact the GGAS office, 510-843-2222 for information and instructions.

2. Contribute financially to the campaign. Checks should be made payable to CalPAW and sent to:

The Planning and Conservation League  
926 J Street, Suite 612  
Sacramento, CA 95814

And don't forget to sign one of the petitions.

## HOTLINE

Let your representative know how important it is for them to support good wetlands legislation. Call **1-800-258-2222** and ask for **Hotline #1000**. For \$6.00, Western Union will send telegrams asking your representative and two other key legislators to co-sponsor the "Wetlands Reform Act of 1993," HR 350.

## SEED SALE COMING RIGHT UP

Our September sale is early this year—orders with checks payable to GGAS and a self-addressed, stamped envelope must be received in the office by Thursday, **September 9**. Pick-up will be **Friday, September 17**, 1–4 p.m., and **Saturday, September 18**, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the GGAS office in Berkeley.

The seed sales are an important source of income for the chapter. Our prices are competitive with most commercial sources and our cause is a good one. We do not have space in our office to store large quantities of seed, so we are unable to keep much in stock between sales. Order plenty so you don't run out.

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The Aquatic Habitat Institute, Contra Costa County  
Science and Math Educators and Mills College  
present

## *Teaching About Creeks*

at Mills College, Oakland

Saturday, November 6, 1993 (Conference)

Sunday, November 7 and Saturday and  
Sunday, November 13 and 14 (Field Trips)

The conference, featuring symposia, workshops, a curriculum fair, and field trips, will provide educators with tools to spark a greater interest in and effectively teach about creeks. Presenters include leading Bay area scientists, educators, and representatives from environmental groups. Professional credit from Mills College is available.



To obtain a registration form, or more information, please call or write the Institute: Aquatic Habitat Institute, 1301 S. 46th St. #180, Richmond, CA 94804 (510) 231-9539



GGAS BIRD SEED AND FEEDER SALE

ORDER AND PREPAY BY SEPTEMBER 9

PICK UP ON FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 17, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (evening) \_\_\_\_\_

SEED			QUANTITY	AMOUNT
GGAS' OWN PREMIUM MIX	20 lbs.	\$10.00		
<i>Contains only red and white millet and black oil sunflower seed.</i>				
	50 lbs.	\$19.00		
VOLKMAN WILD BIRD SEED	20lbs.	\$ 9.00		
<i>Composed of only red and white millet—no sunflower seeds (no squirrels)</i>				
	50 lbs.	\$16.00		
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED	25 lbs.	\$15.00		
	50 lbs.	\$25.00		
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER CHIPS	25lbs.	\$23.00		
<i>(New item—no waste!)</i>				
NIGER (THISTLE SEED)	5lbs.	\$10.50		

FEEDERS

DROLL YANKEE 16"	\$28.00		
THISTLE FEEDER	\$10.00		
HUMMINGBIRD (window)	\$10.00		
ZINGER (saucer style)	\$15.00		
HUMMINGBIRD (16 oz. bottle)	\$12.00		
SUET CAGE (2"×5"×5")	\$ 5.50		
SUET CAKE (16 oz.)	\$ 4.00		
FEEDER POLE (sectional)	\$16.00		

Be sure to include your check with a stamped and self-addressed envelope.

SUB-TOTAL  
ADD .0825% TAX  
TOTAL  
CONTRIBUTION TO GGAS  
TOTAL

Pick up in Berkeley at the GGAS office.

## BACK YARD BIRDER

There are some of us who can't resist "just one more" book on birds. It's a bit like waving a red flag in front of a bull. CHARGE! (Visa or Mastercard) There's an unwritten law that says bird lovers are also mad about books in general and ones about nature and birds specifically.

For me, it all started when my Mom gave me her *Birds of the Pacific States* by Hoffman (sorry, but it's out of print). It has mainly black and white paintings but wonderful text on bird habitat, behavior and song.

When I took my first class I was sure I deserved Roger Tory Peterson's *A Field Guide to Western Birds* in hard cover. I poured over the whole book, the preface, introduction, all the color plates and began marking the list. Once I began going out regularly, I knew I needed a soft cover field guide. *The Golden Guide* by Robbins, et al. was very popular and included birds of all of North America. Those dumb squiggles that are supposed to represent birds' songs didn't add a thing; however, it became dog-eared and finally fell apart, but I still have it since I kept all sorts of notes and tips on various birds. When a new revised edition came out I eagerly snapped it up only to discover that it was a big disappointment. Apparently, there are many inaccuracies within the text and numerous errors in the art with poor color reproduction. I like the format with the maps and text facing the illustrations but it just isn't very good.

Then along about 1984 came the *National Geographic Field Guide to North America* (the 1983 edition was revised so that the second edition corrected some of the inaccuracies found in the first. Another excuse to replace mine when it disintegrates . . . very soon). It may be larger, heavier and less well

bound, but I love it. If I am travelling anywhere in N. A. it goes with me. The "Living Bird Quarterly," published by Cornell's laboratory of ornithology did a comparison of field guides in spring 1988 (Peterson's Western Guide was not yet out) and they gave it the highest marks for accuracy and completeness of text and for illustrations and usability. Before I even pack I bone up on possible bird sightings. Recently we went to Baja and I made up a wish list of birds. Somehow, I remembered the book said that the Scott's Oriole had a song "suggestive of the Western Meadowlark." Right on cue, a beautiful song came from a palm tree and there was a gorgeous male, soon joined by his mate. The "junk birds" (most common) at our hotel were Hooded Orioles, a definite treat!

Recently I was drooling over the new Peterson guide to Western Birds when my husband "convinced" me I needed it. It is excellent. I love the way it opens almost flat, it's well-made and best of all, it has all kinds of extra tips on identification—great for all levels of birding. E.g. types of bird flight are mentioned throughout, and there are comparisons of bills and field marks and silhouettes. I even learned that he arranges the birds so they are not arranged in systematic or phylogenetic order but are grouped in eight main *visual* categories:

- (1) Swimmers—ducks & ducklike birds
- (2) Aerialists—gulls & gull-like birds
- (3) Long-legged waders—herons, etc.
- (4) Small waders—plovers, sandpipers
- (5) Fowl-like birds—quail, grouse
- (6) Birds of prey—hawks, eagles, owls
- (7) Nonpasserine land birds
- (8) Passerine (Perching) birds.

There are jillions of books on birds which are quite specific. Since I need reference type books for this column I have an excuse for an evergrowing library!

So, in selecting a field guide try to think of the one most useful to your needs. You can always borrow a pal's guide to birds in exotic places. My East Africa field guide has made many more trips to that continent than I! Or, borrow from your library to see what you might like to have in your library. If you're nuts about birds, as I am, you can pick up little bits of information which you will then recall just when you need it out in the field with your field guide.

—MEG PAULETICH

## THE PAPAGENO PROJECT BRINGS JOY TO THOSE CONFINED TO THE HOME

The Papageno Project, initiated by our GGAS member Muriel Leff, is going great guns. Well over fifty people who cannot leave their homes now have bird feeders and seed and are enjoying the pleasures we all share when watching birds feed.

We would like to thank Mitch Erikson of Perky Pet Products who has generously contributed 96 bird feeders to the project and has offered more.

The bird seed, however, must be paid for and the cost is considerable in the volume needed for all these feeders.

If you are interested in helping with this project, contributions are gratefully accepted. Please memo your check "Papageno Project". Thanks.



## SAN FRANCISCO FALL BIRDING CLASSES

Evening bird classes taught by Joe Morlan will be starting September 8, 9 and 14. All classes meet 7-9:30 p.m. in room 222, Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore at Bay St. Free parking is in the school lot off Bay St. on the east side of the building.

The instructor is co-author of *Birds of Northern California* and compiler of the recorded "Northern California Rare Bird Alert" sponsored by Golden Gate Audubon Society. Slides illustrate all classes and the text for all classes is *A Field Guide to Birds of North America*, second edition, by the National Geographic Society.

**Field Ornithology I** meets on Tuesdays. It is an introduction to birds and birding, combining basic field skills with study of bird ecology, biology and behavior. Part A starts September 14 and ends October 26; Part B starts November 2 and ends December 14.

**Field Ornithology II** meets on Wednesdays. It is a continuing in-depth study of the identification and status of North American water birds, including waterfowl, rails and shorebirds. Part A starts September 8 and ends October 20; part B starts October 27 and ends December 15.

**Field Ornithology III** meets on Thursdays. It is a continuing study of land birds including swallows, jays, wrens and thrushes. Part A starts September 9 and ends October 21; part B starts October 28 and ends December 16.

These classes are endorsed by the Golden Gate Audubon Society. Optional field trips on weekends may be arranged by the instructor. Please bring binoculars and field guides to class if you have them.

Fees are \$65 for each seven-week





WE NEED...

Golden Gate Audubon, blessed with an extraordinarily active group of board members and volunteers that have helped make this one of the west's most effective Audubon chapters, continues to have one glaring hole in our volunteer support: **we have no Hospitality Chairman.**

Our monthly membership meetings (a total of eight meetings a year) provide an opportunity for our members to gather and socialize and we have traditionally served cookies and coffee/tea/juice before the program. The immediate job of the Hospitality Chairman is to serve as the refreshment coordinator for the meetings (and for our occasional other events), to arrange for volunteers to bring sweet treats and set up the beverages.

The job need not end there. We are always in need of ideas for improving our meetings and making them more member-friendly. Suggestions would be welcomed; organizing would be warmly embraced.

The Hospitality Chairman may also serve on the GGAS Board of Directors although this is not a mandatory part of the job.

WISH LIST

We need to upgrade our present office computer—a used 386 or 486 would fill the bill nicely.

FRANKLIN MINT  
AUDUBON PLATES

Mr. Fred Grimes has presented GGAS with four eight-inch Sterling silver plates etched with Audubon drawings of Night Heron, Wood Thrush, Audubon's Warbler, and Bald Eagle. They are in tarnish resistant presentation cases. The gift of this long time member and Albany resident is much appreciated.

**THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY** offers many opportunities to meet fellow members and supporters and to advance the Audubon Cause. Make time to take part in the affairs of your society. Here are a few examples for which you might volunteer:

- ( ) Birdseed Sales
- ( ) Weekend Greeter at Audubon Canyon Ranch
- ( ) Help in the office: 3 hours per week or so
- ( ) Monthly meeting greeter  
( ) SF ( ) Berkeley
- ( ) Christmas Count
- ( ) April Birdathon
- ( ) Letter writing
- ( ) Helping at GGAS booth at special events
- ( ) Help in a pinch: volunteer pool
- ( ) Data entry in office computer
- ( ) Help with food for special events
- ( ) Fundraising
- ( ) Illustrations for *The GULL*
- ( ) Articles for *The GULL*

If you could help, please check items of interest and return this form to GGAS. We will use this information only to follow up on your offer of help.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Comments are invited, please use a separate sheet of paper. If you have questions call the office, **510-843-2222**.

## NEWS FROM OUR RANCH

Audubon Canyon Ranch (415) 868-9244

Shoreline Hwy., Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Wildlife Sanctuaries & Centers for Nature Education  
under joint sponsorship of Golden Gate, Madrone, Marin  
and Sequoia Audubon Societies

Gary Holloway, President

**GOLDEN GATE REPRESENTATIVES ON THE AUDUBON  
CANYON RANCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Steven Margolln, *ex officio*

Dan Murphy

Nickl Spillane

Bruce Walker

### Now Its Ravens!

You may remember the Golden Eagle which "blessed" us with its presence a few years ago. Now a family of Common Ravens has learned how to belly-up to the heronry for a meal. Only July 4, a family of 5 ravens soared overhead. Below they caught sight of two recently hatched Great Egrets. Alone in their nest, they were easy prey for the ravens. Startled ACR visitors witnessed one of the adult ravens swoop on the nest, grab a baby egret and fly off with it. A few hours later the raven family returned. They approached from the dense cover behind the nest, snatched the remaining egret and flew off.

Does this happen all the time? What can we do about it? Who's responsible? Well, this behavior is previously unknown at ACR. That doesn't mean ravens haven't been predators at our heronry, but it does mean we haven't caught them in the act. Ravens are opportunistic diners. Carrion, small vertebrates, various fruits and just about anything else that is available can be a significant part of the raven's diet. It is noted in the literature that they take the young of seabirds including cormorants, and they have been noted to

take young herons. We'll watch this one to see if ravens are frequent predators at ACR.

As to what we can or even should do about it, there isn't much in the line of options. ACR acknowledges that predation is part of the natural cycle of things and as such we don't interfere, even when we want to. The responsibility for caring for young birds falls on the shoulders/wings of the parents. When adult egrets abandon their nests for long periods of time, as was the case on July 4, the likelihood of predation from ravens or any of a number of other opportunistic predators increases. It would seem egrets and herons with attentive parents are more likely to survive the nestling stage of life than others. Perhaps the parents of these birds were both inexperienced nesters. Perhaps they were just hungry. We aren't likely to find out.

On a brighter note, I stopped at the Ranch on July 11, and young birds were trying their wings, crashing into trees and generally facing reality; it's a long way to the ground, it's really hard to land just on the right branch, and the only way out of the canyon is to fly. Reality is tough for all of us I guess.

### Thanks All!

With the public season over we want to thank LaRee Holmes for the great job she did as our 1993 Weekend Coordinator. The public season just wouldn't have worked nearly as well without her.

Thanks, too, to all the volunteer hosts who gave a day or two to greet our visitors.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

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GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY THANKS THE GENEROUS DONORS who responded to our January letter. Funds continue to come in. The funds received will be judiciously expended to advance the efforts indicated in the letter.

Evi Altschuler

Merrilyn McCuiston

Leora Feeney

Ruth Omatsu

Carol L. Hanson

Jenise Porter

Leslie Lethridge

Leslie M. Reiber & David Witt

George & Helene Strauss

Catherine L. Zeller



And of course thanks so very much to our Ranch Guides who volunteered their weekends to help the rest of us better understand the goings on at the heronry, the lagoon and in the ponds.

### **Fall Program**

You should have received your Ranch Bulletin by now. If you haven't or you want to register for one of the following programs please call the Ranch at (415) 868-9244.

### **Overnight at Tom's Point**

Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 18 & 19 (free). Work and play at Tomales Bay with John Kelly.

### **Under the Heronry**

Saturday, Oct. 9 (free). Explore behind the mystery fence at the back of the ranch yard with Ray Petersen.

### **Not Just a Work Day at Cypress Grove**

Saturday, Oct. 16 (free). Dusting and cleaning to help us get ready for winter with John Kelly.

### **Bats, Toads and Autumn Tricks at Bolinas Lagoon**

Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 30 and 31

(\$100 for a family of 4). Ray will lead this annual Halloween weekend event with our traditional sailing pumpkins on Bolinas Lagoon.

### **Fall Work Day at Bolinas Lagoon**

Saturday, Nov. 6 (free). Help get the Ranch ready for winter with Nancy, Ray, Skip and all the gang.

### **The Way They Lived: Native American Lifestyles at BAP**

Saturday, Oct. 30 (\$30). Foley Benson and John Peterson will share some of their insights about the way indigenous people in the Sonoma region lived before the coming of the Spanish.

### **Guided Nature Walks at the Bouverie Audubon Preserve**

Saturdays: Sept. 25 and Oct. 23 and Nov. 13. 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (free). Please call to reserve your place on a docent led nature walk at (707) 938-4554.

DAN MURPHY

## **GIFTS and BEQUESTS**

### **FOR GGAS**

#### **Gift of**

Fred Grimes  
Sophie Roberts  
Marc Ordman

### **FOR PAPAGENO PROJECT**

Anne-Marie Pansegrau  
Maria-Marta Herrera

### **FOR ACR**

#### **In Memory of**

Helene Mayne  
Yolanda Stevenson

Robert & Gertrude Allen  
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Lucido

### **FOR AUDUBON ADVENTURES**

Peter J. Watkins

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.



THE GULL

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY ROSTER

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Recording Secretary, Leslie Lethridge (510-655-0418)\* — 94  
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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT  
(510) 528-0288 Update: (510) 524-5592

Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc.  
Office: (510) 843-2222  
FAX (510) 843-5351  
2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G  
Berkeley, California 94702  
RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

As a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically enrolled in the local chapter, Golden Gate Audubon Society. Chapter benefits include receipt of *The GULL*, access to field trips and programs, and the opportunity to volunteer. Call the office if you have any questions.



10/93

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